591
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[361]

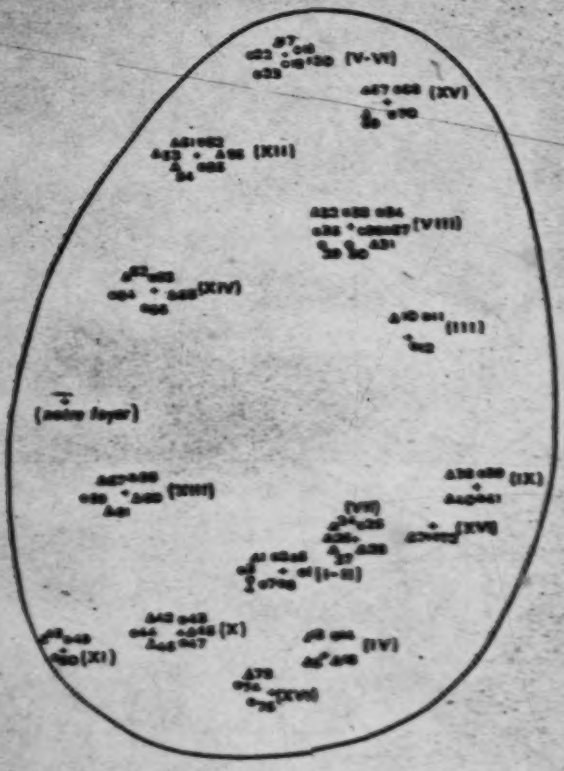

Fig. 14. --Distribution of Families in Temporary Residence.

fire, and the group of six personshas arrived late at the reunion, after an isolated trip. Fires 16 and 17, united at the winter camp (II), are completely isolated in camp (chart III); the same for fires 14 and 15 and for fires 3 and 10.

[24] (3) Since several families join around the same fire, it does not seem possible to deduce any rule of residence, which seems to confirm the impossibility of obtaining from the informants a clear answer to the question of whether the young couples establish themselves separately after marriage, or remain near the parents of the wife or the husband. In two cases, we see the daughters rejoin their parents fire: a12, abandoned by her husband, and a22 at the time of her widowhood. During the winter camp, the household of fire 4 resides with the parents of the husband; and household 6 with the wife's parents (fire 5 in the two cases). Likewise at this time, fire 2 is installed in the hut of the husband's "father." Finally, in two cases, one sees parents, unfit for the economic battle because of age or widowhood, installed at their daughter's fire, as A65 and a66, and

1: Lévi-Strauss E-5 (1938-1939) 1948 SP17 Nambicuara SP17

[End Plate II]

1-2. At the site of the semi-permanent village of group a1 (cf. p. 48). 3. Forced halt on the road by the same village (cf. p. 87 ff.).

2: Lévi-Strauss E-5 (1938-1939)1948
SP17 Nambicuara SP17

342 shelter and lights its own fire in the opening. During the rainy season,
[361] villages consisting of one or more beehive huts are built on slight hillocks above the course of a secondary stream. Some of the *Eastern Nambicuara* build only shelters, although larger and stronger than the ones described. The beehive hut is very light, each about 10 to 20 feet (3 to 6 m.) in diameter. The frame consists of several long, supple poles, bent so that both ends can be stuck into the ground and tied together at the top, where they cross. Circular branches running horizontally are tied to the poles at different levels. The *Central* and *Western Nambicuara* have a more elaborate hut (pl. 37, *top*) whose perimeter is about 50 feet (15 m.). It has a central post from the base of which several forked poles run obliquely to support the bent poles of the external frame. All types of huts are thatched with horizontal layers of palm leaves, those of *Central* and *Western Nambicuara* exactly like the houses of their southern neighbors, the *Kepikiriwat*.

A gabled house without walls was also observed by Roquette-Pinto, who recorded other kinds of temporary huts. Some were built by sticking two branches into the ground, bending them over and attaching them to a horizontal pole tied to two perpendicular posts and covering them with bunches of grass.

352 The *Nambicuara*, although all their neighbors use hammocks, sleep on
513 bare ground or on flat pieces of bark from the paxiuba palm. Because of this custom, the *Paressi* nicknamed them *Uaikoahöre*, "Those Who Sleep on the Ground."

CLOTHING AND ADORNMENT

[291] Both sexes are naked, except that men sometimes tie a small tuft of
301 buruty straw to their belt to cover the sex organs. Both men and women wear a thin, cotton-thread belt strung with white or black beads cut from river mollusk shells or from tucumã palm nuts. Such beads, with larger triangular pieces of mollusk shells, are also used for necklaces, earrings, bracelets, and other ornaments. Men wear grass or reed pins through their upper and lower lips; and, through their nasal septum, a larger pin made of a jacu (*Penelope*) feather mounted on a stalk covered with plaited cotton thread and porcupine quills and trimmed with a red toucan feather ring. Both sexes wear armlets and anklets of woven cotton, burity straw, feathers, parts of dried birds, fur, or mollusk or crawfish shells. Women wear one or more bracelets cut from the tail of the great armadillo and double bandoleers of plaited cotton dyed with urucú and decorated with porcupine quills. Hair ornaments are confined to men: circlets of plaited straw, of straw and red toucan feathers, or of fur with
[714] feather pendants. War dress consists of a jaguar-skin bonnet (pl. 36, *top, left*) with a long, plaited buriti-straw tail painted with red stripes and dots hanging down from the nape of the neck.

3: Lévi-Strauss E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
SP17 Nambicuara SP17

people are seldom met together, the average size of the bands being twenty individuals, women and children included. This demographic collapse cannot possibly have taken place without affecting the structure of the band. But here, too, we do not need to concern ourselves with such questions as the type of political organisation in earlier times. It is probably more difficult to understand Nambikuara sociology now than it was thirty years ago. Perhaps, on the contrary, the much reduced Nambikuara band offers, better than in the past, a privileged field for a study in social anthropology. My contention is that, precisely on account of its extreme impoverishment, Nambikuara political structure lays bare some basic functions which may remain hidden in more complex and elaborate systems of government.

Each year, at the end of the rainy season, that is, in April or in early May, the semi-permanent dwellings laid in the vicinity of the gallery-forest where the gardens are cleared and tilled, are abandoned and the population splits into several bands formed on a free choice basis. Each band includes from two to about ten families usually tied by kinship. This may be misleading when a band is met, for one easily gets the impression that it is formed as an extensive family. It does not take long to discover, however, that the kinship tie between two families belonging to separate bands may be as close, and eventually closer, than between two families inside the same band. The Nambikuara have a simple kinship system based on cross-cousin marriage and the subsequent dichotomy between "cross" and "parallel" in every generation. Therefore, all the men in one generation are either "brothers" or "brothers-in-law," and men and women are to one another either siblings (true or classificatory) or spouses (true or classificatory). Similarly, children are, in relation to the adults, either sons and daughters (true or classificatory) or nephews and nieces, which is the same as actual or potential children-in-law.[1] As a result, there is no great choice of terms to express kinship, and this explains why kinship inside the band may appear closer than it actually is, and kinship between people belonging to different bands more remote than shown by genealogies. Furthermore, a bilateral cross-cousin marriage system functioning in a relatively small tribe must produce a progressive narrowing, and even a multiplication, of the kinship ties between any two individuals. This is a supplementary reason preventing family

[1] C. Lévi-Strauss. "The Social Use of Kinship Terms among Brazilian Indians." American Anthropologist, 45 (3) 1943.

4: Oberg E-5 (1949)1953
SP17 Nambicuara SP17

226 headwater streams. The deep clear streams make fishing with timbó difficult. Game in the forests and on the plain is scarce. Yet by exploiting all the resources of the area the Nambicuara are able to survive. In contrast to the other tribes 262 reported in this monograph the Nambicuara have the broadest resource base, as the list of their resources in Appendix 1 indicates.

132 The Eastern Nambicuara occupy the high plateau between Utiarity and Vilhena. At Utiarity the altitude is 442 meters and at Vilhena [131 133] 665 meters. The dry season extends from May to September. Except for occasional south winds, which bring a cold drizzling rain for a day or two, the season is clear, cool, and dry, the daily temperatures ranging from 60° to 80° F. During this 132 period the grass withers, the livestock of the white 221 men having to subsist on shrubs and what fodder the owners can provide. Horses and mules, par- [224] ticularly, suffer during these months. In August the Indians burn the dry grass so that with the first showers new grass can grow out and attract the deer, which the Indians can then hunt.

[805] The dry season, which the Nambicuara call *kwémbire*, is the most difficult. By the end of June they have consumed the manioc, maize, beans, and other crops which they have planted. During July and August they subsist on palm nuts, cumbaru beans, fruta de lobo, snakes, insects, fish, and whatever animals they can kill on the plateau or in the forest. The rainy season 805 (*wahásu*) is divided into periods depending upon the fruits as they come into season. September 221 is known as *pañdúwasu*, for during this period the people depend upon the jaboticaba fruit. October and November are called *pa'asadjíru*, for during these months the bacaba palm nut ripens. December and January are termed *dáru*, or piqui time. February and March are known as *cacáru*, which appears to cover a variety of berries and small fruits. April and May are termed *dasapañdíru*, as many fruits and nuts come into season, particularly, the cashew nut. During these months the garden crops also come in, giving the Nambicuara a short period of abundance.

SETTLEMENTS AND SHELTERS

361 Each of the four Eastern Nambicuara bands 621 has a defined area within which it hunts, fishes, collects, and grows its crops. These territories in-

[p. 87 (A)]

clude at least one stretch of river and the "galeria" forest which lines its banks. Except during the planting and harvesting season the members of the band are on the move up and down the narrow confines of the territory. Within this hunting territory they have camping places rather than villages. A semipermanent camp site where fields are cultivated for 2 or 3 years is known as *sinaiéu*. Any place where the band or a family may stop overnight is known as *siéwa*. At present the Wakitiéu band has one house (*siéu*) at the place where it is farming. The entire band occupies the house, each family having its own fire around which it sleeps at night. The unmarried men gather around another fire. Julio informed me that their house is rectangular with stake walls and a gable roof covered with sapé thatch. Some years ago when the band was larger he said they occupied a different place on which they built three houses. These houses were built by placing a series of saplings into the ground to form an oval. The tops were then fastened to a ridge pole, the framework being covered with sapé or palm fronds. A smaller beehive-shaped house is made in the same way. Houses of this type are from 6 to 10 feet high. Near the living house they build a small flute hut (*sinadéhlaru*) and, when the occasion demands, a shaman's hut (*sihdeatu*).

If the weather is cold while they are out hunting the band or the family may build a temporary brush hut for the night. Sometimes only a windbreak (*siatdatsi*) is considered sufficient. On warm nights during the dry season the group camps under a tree. In favorite hunting places the same camp site will be used repeatedly. When the soil around the permanent camp site or village becomes exhausted, fields are cleared some distance away and small huts are put up for the workers. As the distance increases the old camp site is eventually abandoned and a new camp site is established.

As the Nambicuara do not use hammocks, beds, or seats, there is not much in the way of furniture in their shelters. Utensils are restricted to a few gourd vessels, tin cans, burden baskets and small flat baskets, fire fans, bows and arrows, and tools used by men. When they move, these articles are placed in burden baskets which are carried by the women. The Wakitiéu do not

[10] The position of all groups known to be scattered through the Serra do Norte and Juruena Valley is recorded on the ethnographic map of the region which goes with these notes.[1]

[218] The exact meaning of the names cited above cannot yet be given with certainty. In the light of existing data, however, their study leads to the following conclusions which cannot be far from the truth.

Cocozu: "Uncles"; thus called by the others, perhaps, because they are the most primitive members of the whole tribe.

[578] Anunzu: This is clearly a corruption of the term anungzú or anungçú, which means "woman's milk"--a disparaging epithet like so many others found throughout the Americas; it may mean "infants" (unweaned babies).

Uaintaçu: Apparently a corruption of uintaçú, which means "alligator" [Port. jacaré] in the language of the Juina Nambicuara. The Uaintaçu group would thus be none other than the old Jacare tribe mentioned in the first chapter of this work.

Tagnani: They are obviously the Tamarari of the old geographic maps; they should be equated with the Tamarare or Camarare, who gave the river its name and who are mentioned in several ancient documents.

Tawite: This word signifies "child" or "son" [offspring], a common appellation among other tribes as well.

In order to avoid future confusion, I propose to retain the name "Nambicuara" in conjunction with the specific name peculiar to each group.

[579] The villages of the Serra do Norte Indians are usually built on the crest of small hills, far from the watercourses. Some are more than one kilometer distant from the nearest river or stream.

It may be assumed that the choice of such sites has a twofold aim: the Indians suffer less from mosquitoes and they dominate the surrounding territory, which is an advantage to people leading as they did up to now a life of constant warfare.

The village is built on a large plaza, fifty meters in diameter; once cleared of bush, which is rooted up [219] by hand, the ground is kept clear by the constant tread of feet. One night of dancing, with its endless beat along the same path, suffices to smooth out the village square.

[580]

[1] [See map following foreign text, col. 16 - Analyst]

7: Roquette-Pinto--20 E-4, 5 (no date) 1938 SP17 Nambicuara SP17 (ca. 1912)

321 The circular spot formed by the village grounds in the middle of the bush gradually acquires the appearance of a star, owing to the paths that lead out from its circumference.

[312 +13] Access to the village grounds is free. There is no fence or hedge to prevent admittance to the plaza; no fortifications or other defensive features are to be found in the vicinity. (1)

> 1. The Tupian Indians of the Gi-Paraná, on the other hand (like the Tupinamba of old and other [tribes]), obstructed the paths leading to their villages with spikes [estrepes] which had to be removed when they established relations with the Rondon Mission. (See Col. M. Rondon, Conferencias [Lectures], pp. 161-162.)

Nambicuara villages always consist of two houses, which are set face to face at opposite ends of the plaza.

[37] [220] The region consists of extensive forests, stretches of scrubland [cerrado], areas of nearly impenetrable bush [charravascal], and a few stretches of open prairie. The Indians prefer the scrubland as the site of their villages.

The forest is dangerous on account of snakes, wild beasts, and even timber which often crashes down on the hunters; the prairie is dangerous because it exposes the village to enemy attack and does not afford any protection against invaders. But the scrubland serves the purpose very well; it has few disadvantages and many advantages.

342 This the Nambicuara know well; their hut blends into the greyish hues of the surrounding vegetation; it is like a shrub among other shrubs; from a distance it can hardly be distinguished. Its shape, though well defined, merges into the vague forms of the bush.

Naturally, those whose eyes are accustomed to the dust-veiled mass of xerophytic upland vegetation can quickly spot the huts; the illusion cannot deceive an experienced eye. But the mimicry is nevertheless real.

342 In order to erect one of these screens, which the muleteers call "little hunting huts" [maloquinhas de caça], and which are found scattered between the Juruena and Doze de Outubro rivers, the Indians begin by clearing the ground thoroughly. Then they plant two large leafy branches into the earth, one at each end of a straight line, and bend them at the top over a crosspiece held by two forked stakes sunk into the ground in front.

They complete the covering with straw or with grass rooted up for the occasion, the earth still clinging to its roots.

Inside--or rather beneath--the shelter, a small fire is lit.

Each screen covers an area of approximately two to four square meters. If the Indians are numerous, each family group erects its own shelter. The structure is actually a good representative of what German ethnologists call Windschrim [windscreen].

The Indians of the groups farther north (Tagnani, Tawite) do not build their temporary shelters in the same way.

As a general rule, their provisional dwelling is simpler: it consists of one or more leaves of the babassu or some other palm [225] which are stuck into the ground. This is not a windscreen, but a mere shade against sun or rain squalls.

● 361 These [latter] Indians, incidentally, live in a region of extensive forests and thick bush which affords adequate protection against the rain; whereas the others inhabit an area consisting largely of fields and scrubland. Another instance of the geographic environment conditioning human behavior.

[421] The Cocozu Nambicuara call their village ziçu, while the Anunze call it chicê. These words have the general meaning of "dwelling place": they signify either "house" or "village."

We do not know with certainty how they build their permanent dwellings.

[343] The women alone take part in the building of a hunting shelter: they cut down the necessary branches, while the children help by gathering the grass and straw which serve to complete the roof.

They change their dwelling place frequently. While following the trail that brought us to the Juina River village where we spent the night, we passed several former sites of the village.

361 [226] We do not know yet what determines these shifts to nearby locations; they may perhaps be caused by the death of an [748] Indian or by some communal misfortune. The distances involved are so small that the moves could not possibly derive from any significant ecological changes.

342 In order to keep rain water from seeping underneath the thatch, the Tagnani and Tawite Indians cover the inner ground perimeter of their conical huts with a series of overlapping plates made of jatobá shells.

The rain does not leak in.

354 It would not be fair to imagine the interior of the huts as hot and stuffy; air penetrates freely in between the leaves.

Nevertheless, the situation changes when the Indians light their small fires. Happily for them, the thatch is sufficiently permeable to keep their eyes free from the grave diseases often encountered among primitive peoples whose dwellings are smoky.

352 Household furnishings are rudimentary; except for the grids mentioned above and a few large pots, nothing else might properly be termed a piece of furniture. All other objects are tools, artifacts, [334] weapons and ornaments [227] [plates p. 222] which they carry with them on every journey, no matter how brief. Only the heavier mortar and graters, which cannot be carried easily, are left in the hut. These barbarians in turn could say: "Omnia mea mecum porto" [everything that is mine I carry with me].

Straw pallets, cured hides, hammocks, sleeping platforms, cots and true beds represent types of bedding characteristic of different stages of civilization.

513 The use of pallets already indicates a certain degree of advancement; but the Nambicuara have no bed other than the earth. They sleep on the bare ground.

They did not possess the hammock, that inseparable companion of their neighbors the Parecí; now that they are acquainted with it, they hold it in high regard. It was difficult to obtain any rest among them during the night; no sooner had we set up our hammock than three or four candidates would appear... And once they had taken over, it was hard to get it back. We were frequently awakened by Indians who forcibly asserted their desire to sleep in the hammocks we occupied.